DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 200 312 PS 012 065

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TITLE Life Style Study: Children of the Lesser World in the English-Speaking Caribbean. Volume I: Literature in Retrospect.
INSTITUTION Bernard Van Leer Foundation for Early Childhood Education (CECE), Kingston, Jamaica.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 98p.; Colored pages may not reproduce clearly.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bibliographies; Child Abuse; Child Neglect; *Disadvantaged Environment; Discipline; *Family Life; Foreign Countries; *Individual Development; Literature Reviews; Marriage; Nutrition; Parent Role; Play; *Social Behavior; *Social Problems; Social Services; Social Values
IDENTIFIERS *Caribbean Islands; Superstition

ABSTRACT

This literature review focuses on the conditions of life and aspects of the behavior of people in areas of the English-speaking Caribbean. The review is based on books, reports and papers which discuss broad features of sociological problems, the impact of academic changes on individuals and the consequences these changes have on people's socioeconomic status. Additionally, the review identifies similarities and differences in living conditions on the islands and attempts to ascertain the relationship between these conditions and the development of children. Other topics discussed include family patterns, parental roles, marital status and behavior, feeding and nutrition, separation from and abandonment of children, values and attitudes, discipline of children, play and early stimulation, provisions for "educare" and protection, and legislation relating to children and families. (Author/RH)

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LIFE STYLE STUDY:

CHILDREN OF THE LESSER WORLD

IN

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN

VOLUME I

LITERATURE IN RETROSPECT

PS012065

D.R.B. GRANT

1980

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PREFACE

In developed countries psychology and the study of early childhood seem to be the order of the day for their community of educators. To a certain extent this upsurge of interest and concern, due partly to the humanitarian and partly to the scientific attitudes toward the social injustices of the young child, resulted from the popular academic resurgence of the child study movement of the late nineteenth century. It is this movement which theorised that "psychological development results from a dynamic interaction between children and their physical and social environment."[+] Studies of child psychologists, sociologists, et al, in search of the elements in the environment that influence the growth and behaviour patterns of the young child, seem to agree that environmental settings do provide a variety of resources and opportunities, that contribute significantly to the differences in vitality, responsiveness, and self-hood of children.

Because every child is expected to live somewhere (good, bad or indifferent) and to be cared for by someone (warm or cold, loving or unamiable) Insel and Moss[•] postulate that the home environment and the neighbourhood are the settings in which children's experimentation, curiosity and sensory and social experiences find expression in interaction with the social

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[+] Newman, B and P. Newman: Development Through Life: A Psyco-social Approach. Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey, 1975.

[•] Insel, P.M. and R.H. Moss: Psychological Environments: Expanding the Scope of Human Ecology. American Psychologist, 1974, # 29.

and physical phenomena that occur around them daily. It is these interactions that help them to form habits and direct their behaviour and socialisation patterns as they develop along the continuum from infancy to adulthood.

Since the environment is such a crucial determinant of the quality of the cognitive and affective development of the child, it is evident that the effects of the people, places and things upon the child will vary from environment to environment; from the parent who is employed full-time to the one who lives by hustling, from the house where everyone seems comfortable to the one where everyone seems to be in everybody else's way, from the house on a reasonable size lot of land (or farm) to the apartment in a "tenement yard" or a shack in a ghetto. Barker[+] refers to these and other environmental variables as behaviour settings -- apparently, an all-inclusive term that implies "the different physical and social dimensions/components of an environment which may function, depending on what behaviours are occurring." Of course, in evaluating the impact of variables such as population density, special arrangements of people, places and things, urban and rural experiences, and cultural diversity or homogeneity on the growing child, Altman and Wohlwill[•] theorise that the specific characteristics of the environment have the potential for influencing the psychological adaptation of the young child. French, Rodgers and Cobb[ø]

[+]Baker, R.G. On the Nature of the Environment. Journal of Social Issues, 1963, # 19.

[•]Altman, I. and J. Wohlwill. Human Behaviour and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research. New York: Plenum, 1976.

[ø]French, J.R.P., W. Rodgers and S. Cobb. "Adjustment as Person-Environment Fit". In G.V. Coelho, et al (Eds) Coping and Adaptation. New York: Basic Books, 1974.

claim that this person-environment interaction suggests a process of mutual adaptation in which "the child (or adult) adapts to the expectations of the environment, and the environment is modified in order to more adequately respond to the needs of the individual."

Child psychologists tell us that a child's understanding of his environment changes at each stage of his development, due to changing patterns of exploration and sensory experiences. It is obvious, therefore that the perceptual and conceptual development as well as the breadth of his experiential awareness depends to a large extent on the parent's pattern of movement in the community. Does the parent's "person-environment interaction" provide opportunities for the child (i) to mix with other children? (ii) to go on visits to places of interest, like the zoo, the market, the library, etc. (iii) to play games and/or listen to stories? (iv) to explore somewhere and something to satisfy a curiosity? (v) to want to go to school because of the parent's positive attitude toward school and learning? and (vi) to develop attachment and loyalty to the family and to the community?

Loyalty to the family! - what is meant by "family" in the Caribbean context? In the islands the term family is used to refer to a variety of household groupings ranging from the ideal marriage relationship of mother and father with their children, to a group of related people (adults and children) living together, and to a group of people -- related or not related -- living in the same house. A study of the status of the groupings and relationships does not only give one an insight into the psychological and biological independence of the members of the group, or a knowledge of the parenting style of the care-giving pattern, or of the parent-child and child-child relationships and interaction, but also an understanding of the

impact of the family ideas and ideals on the development of the child, especially during early childhood.

An examination of the literature on the socio-economic status of the different income bracket families of the English-Speaking Caribbean shows the extent to which factors associated with the social conditions of the parents can depress and/or retard, and raise and/or enhance the cognitive, physical, emotional and social development of the young child. Bernstein[+] claims that "children from extreme social groups within societies are exposed from an early age to separate and distinct patterns of learning before formal education begins." It is no wonder, therefore, that educators, pychologists and sociologists agree that because children's experiences are gathered from the social structure of which they are a part, their education must bear some relationship to their environment, and thus "create a particular dimension of significance." It is for this reason, perhaps, that the developments in developed countries are dependent not only on the exploitation of modern technology but also on the inevitable relationship of the economy and the development of the potential of their human resources from the cradle to the workplace. Thus, developed countries are distinguished from Third World countries by the fact that education and care (educare) of their children have become a major form of investment for transforming the scale of production. Equality of educational opportunities in some developed countries is translated in real terms to mean equality of quality education and care. On the other hand, in some Third World countries differences in educational facilities

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[+]Bernstein, Basil. Social Class and Linguistic Development: A Theory of Social Learnings In Education Economy and Society - by Hasley, Floud and Anderson. Free Press of Glencoe, Inc. 1965.

and provision between types of schools, between rural and urban area schools, and between private and public schools do reflect the differences in the level of prosperity of the population served by the school, and these "educare" inequalities inevitably contribute to the attendant continuing social inequalities. In the English-speaking Caribbean there is such an upsurge of interest in and concern for the education and care of the "children of the Lesser world", that the public and the private sectors in association with international funding agencies provide opportunities for the society at large to be sensitive to the needs of these children, and to pool efforts for the development of the human potential and resources they represent.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century the descriptive and experimental child development studies provided much information on the stages of development of children, but very little was said about the inter-relationship of parent and child as a contributory factor in the child's developmental process. In like manner the materials from sociology and social psychology were almost silent on the effects of parents' behaviour style on their children. However, in the mid-twentieth century with the convergence of disciplines -- sociology, psychology, psychiatry, home economics, etc. -- many of the research findings highlighted the influence of the home environment on the growth of children. Their change in outlook was due to the works of (i) Margaret Mead[+] who showed that the "expression of femininity and masculinity in different cultures was determined by modes

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[+]Mead, Margaret. From the South Seas: Studies on Adolescence and Sex in Premature Societies. William Marrow and Co. - New York, 1939.

of child rearing and social norm", (ii) Ralph Ojemann[+] who opined (though inconslusively) that a child's neighbourhood, housing, and schools could be viewed as prime determinants of the child's character; (iii) Hartshorne and May[•] who called attention to the high correlation between the attitude and beliefs of the child with those of his parents; (iv) James Bossard[ø] who stressed the influence of other members (siblings, maids, aunts) of the household on the child, and (v) William Wall[$] who suggested that parents could make mistakes in handling their children without lasting damage to them, if the parents remained "affectionate, supporting and consistent."

These and other contributions to the change in outlook of the effects of parents and the environment on the early life experiences of children have given rise to many research studies, which set out to prove, inter alia, the hypotheses about (i) the consequential implications of child rearing practices, and (ii) the effects of the quality of toilet training, feeding and weaning of the infant upon its character in later childhood. In the

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[+]Ojemann, Ralph H. "Parent Education and the Citizen of Tomorrow" In Proceedings of the Eight Annual Convention of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, Chicago, 1944.

[•]Hartshorne, Hugh and Mark A. May. Studies in Deceit Book I. Macmillan Co., New York, 1928.

[ø]Bossard, James H.S. The Sociology of Child Development. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1954.

[$]Wall, William D. Education and Mental Health: A Report Based upon the Work of a European Conference called by UNESCO at the Music Pedagogique in Paris, Nov-Dec. 1952, UNESCO, Paris, 1955.

Caribbean very few studies have been done to validate these and other hypotheses about parent-child, and environment-child relationships and interactions during early childhood. This is not only necessary, but crucial and imperative now, in order to satisfy the concerns of those interested in early childhood education, as well as in parent and parenting education.

Generally speaking, the need for the study of childhood in the English-speaking Caribbean is increasingly becoming an area of concern partly because of the commitment of the Governments to the education and care of young children, and partly because of the introduction of the Van Leer Programme (B.Ed in Early Childhood Education) in the UWI School of Education, Mona, in 1977. This programme, coupled with the early childhood education option offered in some Teachers' Colleges in the Caribbean is breaking new grounds for a systematic study of young underprivileged children and the impact that various people, places and things in their environment will/can have on the development and realisation of their potential for self-fulfilment.

It is not very easy to define the terms deprived, disadvantaged and/or underprivileged as they refer to early childhood education. But for the purpose of this Life Style Study it is sufficient to consider children as being deprived/disadvantaged/underprivileged "when their parents provide them with little in the way of linguistic stimulation, take minimal interest in their education, and when, (aggravated by poverty and overcrowding) these children have limited opportunity for play or other experiences which are helpful to their intellectual development -- in short, when their environment is barren and unstimulating."[+] The Study

[+]Chazan, Maurice, et al. Just Before School. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971.

of the development of these children seeks to find answers that will enrich knowledge about and understanding of (i) what they are like, (ii) how the environment affects them and what kinds of behaviours the environment encourages/discourages, and (iii) how they may be helped to become self-fulling individuals. Overall, it is hoped that responses to these questions will show whether or not different social groups of children will acquire different experiences, will behave in different ways, and will have different learning styles. Bronfenbrenner explains that "ecological child development is the study which aims at providing a natural history of the child's developmental circumstances, and at documenting the salient features of the child's interactions with the environment."[+] Studies which are expected to provide information on "these salient features" must be conducted in situ, therefore the sample population and the interviewers for this study have been selected from:

(a) Antigua, Montserrat, St. Kitts (the Leeward Islands),

(b) Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent (the Windward Islands),

(c) Barbados,

(d) Jamaica.

In the Caribbean there is some literature about the environment of children, but very limited

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[+]Bronfenbrenner, U. "Toward an Experimental Ecology of Human Development." American Psychologist, 1977, No. 32, pages 513-531.

knowledge of the learning environment of young children, especially those from underprivileged homes. There is insufficient knowledge and understanding of what aspects of these children's environment are significant for early childhood education and primary education. The result of this sparcity of knowledge and understanding is two-fold. First, false or superficial inferences are drawn only from the school behaviour of these children. Secondly, the schools are monocultural, in that the experiences and ways of life of the middle class family are reflected in the curriculum, and the underprivileged children are treated as though they have acquired the cognitive and affective development of their middle class counterparts. Since 1945 there has been a number of socio-anthropological studies of different family patterns in different parts of the world, and the Caribbean. The research and the activities of the Project for Early Childhood Education and Centre for Early Childhood Education, and of Pre-School Education Project (Dominica) have motivated the need for a study of the life styles of the underprivileged 0-3 year olds in the Caribbean.

The Bernard Van Leer Foundation decided to fund this Life Style Study as part of its contribution to the International Year of the Child, to enable the Centre for Early Childhood Education to explore for the wealth of material on these children, and to discover new data for the benefit of the Teachers' College and B.Ed students. This study is intended to provide initial monographs which will serve as springboards for a series of studies to be conducted by the students in the Van Leer programme, with a view to continuously increasing knowledge and understanding about the environment of young children.

As at present conceived there will be six monographs of which this Literature in Retrospect is the first volume. In addition, it is envisaged that a six-year longitudinal programme will be feasible in order to facilitate follow through studies of the present 0-3 year olds who are affected by the environmental circumstances documented in these monographs.

This Literature in Retrospect focuses on the research studies on the home and wider environmental conditions of the young child in some of the English-speaking Caribbean[+] islands, and explores and describes the contributions which some concerned and interested social scientists have already made to an understanding of the lot of the "children in the lesser world in the English-speaking Caribbean". These Studies, Reports, and Papers have been selected from the short list of materials available on the age-range of the population on which the hypotheses of the Life Style Study are based because they give some insight into the environmental deficits of these children. In most of these studies and papers the main theme seems to be that the differences among the "haves" and the "have-nots" are due to variations in the socio-economic status of the breadwinner in the family.

It is hoped that this Literature in Retrospect will, despite its limitations, induce readers in general and the B.Ed and the Teachers' College students in particular, to probe more deeply into some of the documents referred to in the monograph. It is hoped also that the study in general -- "Life Style Study of children of the Lesser World in the Caribbean -- will

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[+]English-speaking Caribbean Islands and West Indies will be used interchangeably in this study.

ultimately encourage the community of educators in the region to move from making broad claims and generalisations about these children to detailed proofs of the ways in which they live. One expects the findings of the study to point the way for a deeper examination into the connection between the life style of these 0-3 year olds and the achievement of their potentials; and between their understanding and the development of an appropriate and relevant programme of education and care for their development.

D.R.B. Grant

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is fairly easy to advocate and initiate a study like this, but despite its facination, there are areas of complexity which dictate the need for voluntary cooperation and support of a general and specialised nature from many people. As Director of the Centre for Early Childhood Education, the seat of the operations of the Study, and as Coordinator of the several activities of the Study, I am indebted to many people and institutions for the gift of their time, energy and help in our search for the literature for this Monograph. The Bernard Van Leer Foundation is one of the very few, if not the only organisation exclusively concerned with early childhood education, with particular reference to the underprivileged. A great debt of gratitude is owed to the Executive Director and to the Chief of Division of Development and Operations for their support and encouragement, respectively, of the concept and development of the Study; and to the Trustees for funding the Study. Coupled with the other members of the staff of the Foundation who have given the Study their encouragement in a variety of ways is Professor W.D. Wall, Scientific Advisor, whose advice contributed to delineating the scope of the study.

It is a pleasure to make special mention of the cooperation, the interest, and the professional involvement of my colleagues George Alexander, Research Fellow and Statistician, and Elsa Leo-Rhynie, Psychologist, in the study. Several sensitive areas of the "Life Style Study" have been entrusted to them.

Miss Sheila Williams, Librarian, was of significant help in preparing "The West Indian Child: A Select Bibliography" without which this Literature in Retrospect would not have been possible. Special thanks must be given to Mrs. Karleen Alexander, for spending many untold hours reading the documents mentioned in the "Select Bibliography", making notes and categorising the information. Mrs. Edith Jones, Student in the Van Leer Programme, did some preliminary work with writing of the manuscript.

The following Libraries receive special mention for the accommodation they afforded the researchers for the relevant literature: The Documentation Centre of the School of Education, the Central Library of the University of the West Indies, (West Indian Collection) The Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute, West Indian Reference Library, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, and the Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Library.

Grateful acknowledgement must be made of all the writers of the books, papers and reports which are referred to and/or reviewed in the text.

Sir Hugh W. Springer, the first Registrar of the University of the West Indies, who as the first Director of the UWI Institute of Education and the chief architect of the Project for Early Childhood Education influenced by outlook as a West Indian educator in thought, in word and in deed. Dr. Elsa W. Walters, who has earned a prominent place in the history of education in Jamaica and the West Indies, helped to nurture this outlook.

Behind the successful venture of every man there is a woman. Beside every successful man there is a woman. My wife, Imogene occupies both positions.

There are many other institutions and people, who have directly or indirectly contributed to the production of this monograph. Their contribution is acknowledged with gratitude. This has truly been a joint venture involving many people, many places and many things.

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1980

INTRODUCTION:

This Literature in Retrospect focuses on the condition of life and living as well as on some aspects of the behaviour of people in areas in the English-speaking Caribbean on which some research findings are available. It is based on a study of books, reports and papers which give and discuss broad features of sociological problems, the impact of academic changes on individuals and the consequences these changes were likely to have on their socio-economic status.

Despite the similarities of living conditions in these islands, there are differences which could affect the life situation of children and their families. This literature-survey sets out to identify these similarities and differences, and to ascertain the crucial relationship between these living conditions and the development of children. Although many changes have taken place since the publication of the documents referred to in this volume, it is necessary to use the salient points raised and/or highlighted by these writers as reference sources for determining variables that might influence the developmental potential of the underprivileged in a region with a variety of population density, poverty levels, and provisions for child care and protection.

The English-speaking Caribbean is made up of fifteen islands stretching from Trinidad and Tobago near the north of the South American Continent to the Bahama Islands near the south of the North American Continent. In size they range from Grenada, (133 square miles) to Jamaica with a land mass of 4,440 square miles. All, but the Bahamas and Barbados, are

mountainous, with the Blue Mountain range (7,700 ft) in Jamaica being the highest in the region. There is a wide range of population density, (the average being 594 per square mile) with Barbados having one of the highest in the world -- 1530 per square mile.

Grant[+] in that section of a paper which deals with the provisions for child care and protection emphasised that "Every child --- rich and poor --- needs a home which can give him/her affection, security, a feeling of belonging, personal worth, and some measure of self-fulfilment, as well as guidance in overcoming the strains of life." This observation is specially important in a region where records show that 13% to 20% of the population were in the age group 0 to 5 years (in Anguilla it was 50%, and in St. Vincent 35%), and, except for Barbados and Jamaica, less than 10% of these children are enrolled in any day care and/or early childhood education institution.

In the light of these and other similarities and differences in the region this Literature in Retrospect also seeks to explore and clarify the contributions which social science researchers have already made to the knowledge and understanding of where and how people live in some of the communities of the English-speaking Caribbean islands.

[+]Grant, D.R.B. Caribbean Underprivileged Children: Their Ecology and Intervention Programmes. A paper prepared for the Santeago (Chile) Symposium on Critical Poverty in Children, 1979.

LIVING CONDITIONS

Psychologist have concluded that the home environment in particular and the community in general contribute to child development because they provide a variety of resources and a diversity of opportunities for interaction and for acquiring early social experiences which may result in expression of ideas, and enhancing the development of potential.[+] The main theme of the Barbados Conference[ø] centred around the development of the pre-school child in the family, the environment and the community setting as well as around early childhood and parent education. Among the findings of this Conference were that (i) the first year of the child was the most dangerous in his growth continuum and (ii) in the West Indies infants were subjected to illnesses such as malnutrition and gastro-enteritis, and (iii) maternal deprivation in the pre-school years very often resulted in children becoming neurotic, and unable to form deep emotional ties.

In specific terms Grant• points out that:

> "regionally, poverty, hunger and poor health are acknowledged as national problems which need early amelioration. Poor children are exposed to poor food, poor sanitation, poor housing, and sub-standard medical care."

[+]Altman, I. and J. Wohlwill. Human Behaviour and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research. New York: Plenum, 1976.

[ø]Report on Workshop on The Needs of the Young Child in the Caribbean, Bridgetown, Barbados, 12th-22nd November 1967.

•Grant, D.R.B. op cit.

He goes on to observe that:

> "mothers who were themselves exposed to and lived under poor conditions are likely to become adults less well-grown, and a greater biological risk as reproducers of children --- they are likely to be subjected to poor health, sub-optimal nutrition and medical care. The result, puny offsprings."*

One of the vexed problems common to the region is that of unemployment. In Dominica, for example 35% of the population are unemployed or just partially employed, and there is a poverty index of 3.74. In Antigua, 25% are unemployed, while in Jamaica the unemployment figure is in the region of 33% to 40%. World Bank sources put the average poverty index at 4.23 for the less developed countries, and 2.38 for the more developed countries in the region. Terra+ observes that "some 40% of the population were in the category of poor, that is below the level of satisfying minimum needs, and some 19% were in the category of "indigent", that is unable to provide even for the cost of food -----" In all the islands living conditions are influenced by the climate, tradition, and poverty. Because there is neither winter nor snow, and the sun is a friend indeed, any kind of material - from cardboard to straw, from coconut palm to bamboo is used to make a house (roof or sides, and/or both). The idea here is simply to have a shelter

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* Grant, D.R.B. Caribbean Underprivileged Children: Their Ecology and Intervention Programmes. A Paper prepared for the Santeago Chile Symposium on Critical Poverty in Children, 1979.

+ Terra, Juan Pablo. The Situation of Children in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Paper prepared by UNICEF Regional Office for the Americas, 15th March, 1979.

against the wind, rain and dew. It must be emphasised that some of these people do wish to have a better and more substantial house, but they are too poor to buy the lumber, the concrete blocks and the corrugated zinc. Of the 803 households[+] visited in a PECE 1970 study 175 were rated as dilapidated, 404 needed repairs, 201 were classified as shocks.

The average low or no-income bracket family likes "nice things" -- meaning they like to wear good clothes, sometimes expensive ones, and to possess the household furniture one would least expect to find in such shabby looking houses. These "nice things" are acquired through the lay-by and/or instalment plan, in time for a special occasion. Of course in many instances the debtor is so badly in arrears with the instalment, due to the poor employment pattern, that the furniture is impounded by the creditor. Until such time, there is the problem of overcrowding -- too much furniture and too many children for the small house.

In the said 1970 study of the 803 household nearly 40% had one room, and 41% had two rooms. The regional census of that year showed the family size to range from 5 to 6 children with the average being 4.5. In Barbados it was under 5 children, (per household) in Jamaica it was 4.2. Nearly 40% of the Caribbean population have 1.9 persons to a bedroom. It is not unusual for three to five children of varying ages and both sexes to sleep in the same bed, and frequently the mother and husband (churched or unchurched) sleep together with the smallest child. Very few low-no-

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[+]Grant, D.R.B. Living Conditions of Some Basic School Children: Pointers to Disadvantage. The Bernard Van Leer Foundation Project for Early Childhood Education (PECE), Mona, Kingston 7, 1974.

income families are concerned about the size of the family. In fact, Lawenthal+ reports that "Another deterrent to family limitation among the poor is the economic value of children as a basis for support claims from the fathers when they are young; and as wage earners later on." There are some women who believe that their health will suffer if they do not have all the children God intended them to have.

Although the water supply in these islands could be considered fairly satisfactory to good, the toilet facilities and the process of garbage disposal leave much to be desired -- both are breeding grounds for disease. In the rural areas of Jamaica people (adults and children) travel up to a mile to a spring/ a stand-pipe for drinking water. Clothes are washed in a river. This is particularly so in Dominica which boasts of 365 rivers. It must be noted, however, that as difficult as it is to get water in some areas most adults manage to keep themselves and their young children clean, on the average. West Indians take great pride in their bodily cleanliness, with girls being more concerned than boys, and some of the shabbiest looking buildings boast of immaculately clean yards, especially on Saturdays and Sundays. Brooms made from every conceivable found shrubs are used to keep the yard and in front of the house clean. The grandparents often quote and seem to believe, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."

+Lowenthal, David. Work and Family Life: West Indian Indian Perspectives. Garden City, New York, Anchor Books, 1973.

Without any doubt one has to agree that the housing people occupy and the type of environment children are forced to live and move in can influence their health, their attitudes and their behaviour. According to Grant[+]

> "The conditions under which most Caribbean families have to live deprive them of proper privacy, foster family clashes, stimulate sloven habits, and may even smother family loyalty. Because of the lack of elbow room and the need for the breadwinner to "hustle", parents have very little time to play with their children."

FAMILY PATTERN

Usually, in developed countries, the term family refers to the monogomous nuclear family in which the one male and the one female adults are married and with their children live in the same house. On the other hand, a variety of groupings is included in the West Indian use of the term family. In general, a family may refer to (i) a father, mother and their children, (ii) the mother and her children, with a step-father, (iii) the mother-child household in which the male figure lives elsewhere, (iv) a group of relatives living in the same house and (v) the extended family in which two or more generations and their families live together in the same house. In this latter situation the grandparents wield a great influence over the upbringing of the children of their daughter and/or son.

[+]Grant, D.R.B. op cit

In her thesis Jones[+] posits that:

> "One common feature of life style for all classes is that in all respects of house training the mother is the principal actor------. Diverse life styles evolve from the simple household based on marriage where the family is constantly gathered together within the house in a series of joint activities and intimate personal relationships, e.g. eating, church going. ----------
> Another life style is based on a purposive type of concubinage-------.
> The more casual type of house-keeping union gives development to another life style which fosters insecurity and unstable patterns of behaviour ---.
> The father (of the day) spends his leisure in the bars or betting shops returning home late at night---------
> During the day the children live in the yard where they play, look after one another and run errands.
>
> Life in the denuded family is still different. The single mother has to rely on wage labour -- domestic work or higglering -- for the support of herself and her children, or seek for a partner to lift the burden from her shoulders."

While the observations by Jones may be accepted as a generally correct description of the union and family patterns in the region some writers like Greenfield[ø] have focussed attention on individual communities. He noted that within the Barbadian context

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[+]Jones, Edith V. A Comparative Study of the Language Development of Institution and Other Children. B.Ed Study, UWI School of Education.

[ø]Greenfield, Sydney M. English Rustics in Black Skin: A Study of Modern Family Form in the Pre-industrialised Society. New Haven: College and University Press, 1966.

marriage was dependent upon the economic circumstances of the couple or of the woman's parents who always thought of "putting on a big wedding" for their daughter. Because of this about 25% of the women within the child-bearing age (15-44 years) in Barbados were married while 24% were in common-law unions.

More recently, Vickers+ in making a case for the Day Nurseries, noted that on the whole young children were always at some disadvantage because of the problems that face their mothers. While observing that the extended family superseded the nuclear type in most of Jamaica, he pointed out that 70% of the children were born out of wedlock, and at least ⅓ of these children did not grow up in the same house with their father.

Henriques• writing on West Indian family organisation stated that:

> "One of the distinctive features of Jamaican lower class family life is the strong sense of kin beyond that of the immediate family."

All the children in the household were seen to be treated by the biological siblings as their brothers and sisters, and no distinction was made by the mother

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+Vickers, Jeane. Jamaica's Pre-School Experiment - A Model Day Care Centre. UNICEF News #99: 1979.

•Henriques, Fernando. Family and Colour in Jamaica 2nd Edition. London: McGibbon, 1968.

and father between adopted and natural children. The findings of research done by Smith[+] in three Guyanese negro communities exhibiting differing degrees of economic prosperity but classified as mainly lower class, were more or less common to the Caribbean. He isolated the mother's attitude to her daughter and grand-daughter - and found a close relationship between mother, daughter and the daughter's children. These relationships were rooted in child care, as "the girl who has children while living in her mother's home will relinquish many of the functions of child care to the mother."

On the question of social stratification Brathwaite[•] found that the lower class family was more matri-central than that of the middle class; that one-third of the children were born to mothers in no stable union; that one-third were of common-law unions (generally unstable in character) and one-third to legally married couples. The "immediate" family consisted of husband, wife, child as well as additional dependents - grandfather and particularly grandmother with whom authority rested. There was also a general tendency for "kinship terms" to be carried into other social relationships. Thus "uncle" and "aunt" were used as terms of address by many children toward all adults with whom they became closely associated.

[+]Smith, M.G. West Indian Family Structure: Seattle - University of Washington Press, 1962.

[•]Brathwaite, L.E. Social Stratification in Trinidad, Social and Economic Studies. Vol. 2 #2-3, October 1953.

On the whole the mother was the main instrument of discipline and affection. Consequently, she gained the central position as an educational force tending to develop certain ambivalence toward authority.

The Jamaican situation seems to present a vast number of conditions to be considered in terms of family life. Cumper[+] found that there was some relationship between family forms and labour problems which resulted in differing life-styles from one community to another. For example, in areas such as Porter's Mountain it was almost unknown for a wife to take a job within the community. (A few women head-of-households were engaged in day's work). The child exposed to this influence was most likely to spend its whole early life in a household which included its mother and her spouse.

In the sugar belts, such as Caymanas, the common-law wife more often than not worked as a labourer for part of the year. The female household head was more common in the resident population of villages than on the sugar estates.

Henriques[ø] conducted an anthropological study within the parish of Portland which not only identified existing conditions affecting the development of under-privileged six year old children, but provided information on the range and nature of environmental experiences available to those children. From personal

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[+]Cumper, George. The Jamaican Family: Village and Estate. Social and Economic Studies. Vol. 7 #1; March 1955.

[ø]Henriques, Ferdinand. op cit.

observation, interviews, and information acquired from books and reports Henriques found that although the structure of family groups was thought to be balanced the Jamaican society presented a picture of "disnomia" (lack of integration or balance), and this was influenced by colour distinctions and their concomitant prejudices on the one hand, and poverty on the other. One interesting finding was that many children were brought up in and influenced by the ideas of two generations ago - the grandmother concept coming out as a general characteristic of the Caribbean life-style.

There was also a tendency for parents to have favourites among children - quite often preference being shown to the "fairest" of the siblings. Thus colour frustration occurred from an early age. Other factors such as resentment to a new baby also helped to create a formal atmosphere of resentment evidenced in some Jamaican adolescents.

The behaviour of certain Jamaican families gave Cohen[+] the impression that there was a loosely constructed group founded on expediency rather than on emotional bonds. According to him husbands and wives kept their salaries and wages secret and rarely ever disclosed their savings to each other. The man gave the woman each week's allowance of money in addition to food for the household; but if he found her earnings sufficient to provide for the household he would consider himself under no obligation to make any further contributions. Therefore the woman never

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[+]Cohen, Y.A. Structure and Function: Family Organisation and Socialisation in the Family and Community in a Jamaican Village. Anthropological Quarterly, 1967.

disclosed her full earnings. Cohen further found that unskilled and/or low-income families were unhappily married due mainly to the strain involved in meeting the obligations of their basic needs. In consequence of this, social intercourse between spouses was minimal -- they rarely shared their leisure. In his study of the small community of Rocky Road, social intercourse was found to be almost totally absent -- with a minimal amount between children and parents. The economic strivings were highly competitive, with particular emphasis on the possession of land.

After studying the marriage pattern in a rural community about 90 miles from Kingston, Gourley[+] et al reported that the most significant finding of the investigation was the numerous cases of first and second cousin marriages which were accepted in this village as the norm rather than the exception. They also observed that this inter-marriage produced an "inner-world" community of people of fair skin and blue eyes.

It seems safe to say that (a) the family is the primary system for the experiences of the young child, (b) the behaviour, ideas, thoughts and values of mothers, fathers, older siblings and other members of the household are likely to affect the life-style of the child, and (c) the nurture and protection of the young child are to a certain extent determined by the

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[+]Gourley, R.J. et al. Aggresive Behaviour In Small Rural Community. West Indian Medical Journal, Vol. 10 #3, September 1961.

parents' education, the kind and amount of resources they are able to bring to the household, and the nature of their interaction with the wider community. If these are accepted as true then the variety of household groupings in the English-speaking Caribbean are contributory factors to the children's sense of their place in the continuous story of evolution and adaptation, and to the process of socialisation.

PARENTAL ROLES

Everyone will agree that no two families or no two parents will perform their parental role in the same way. Perhaps the main reasons for this variability include the differences in the expectations of family members, with respect to the behaviour of father and/or mother, the influence of the community on their values and beliefs, their age, their educational level, the tradition that is handed down by grandparents, their socio-economic level, and to a lesser extent, the mass media and the child protection laws. In short, although the role of the parent is not defined solely by the person who holds that position, parents are expected -- in differing proportions and at different levels -- to be the socialisation agents in the family group, the protectors, the care-givers and the models for their children. Within this four-fold role function, Parsons[+] suggests that fathers and mothers have distinct functions in the family group -- the mother's being an expressive

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[+]Parsons, T. Family Structure and the Socialization of the Child. In T. Parsons and R.F. Bales (eds): Family Socialization and Interaction Process. Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1955.

one, and the father's an instrumental one. According to Parson's adaptive distinction between the mother's and father's roles, the "mother tries to maintain the family's morale and to ensure open paths of communication among family members," while the other "brings resources to the family from outside through work -- and meets task related demands."

In the Caribbean, an analysis of parental role is not a simple one, because of the variety of household settings described earlier. There are many homes of the low-income family -- especially those with teenage mothers -- where the grandmother plays an important role in the upbringing of the child.

One of the most revealing works on West Indian family life is authored by Jacobs and Jacobs,[+] who aimed at showing why social complexities existed for West Indians, and what obligations parents and grandparents had to the young child in the family. The findings revealed that in many instances children cared for by grandparents were more prone to value conflicts since what they learnt at school and church seemed so different from grandma's expectations and standards. They were also struck by the predomimantly matriarchal system in the islands, and the unfortunate exposure of boys to the lighthearted way in which in-house or visiting fathers treated their responsibilities.

[+]Jacobs, Len and Beth. The Family and Family Planning in the West Indies. London: Allen & Unwin, 1967.

Mathews',[ø] account of the distribution and use of authority and responsibility in the home is based on his research on legal and non-legal unions of desendants of West African people in villages, rural towns and urban centres in Trinidad. His intensive investigation which included the use of several data-collecting media -- interviews, life histories, case studies, and social and economic sample surveys, showed that:

> "Authority in the traditional family is shared by father and mother. Mother supervises children at work --- fetching water and firewood and running errands --- and at play; but father is final authority."

However, he explained that when there was no man in the house, the authority rested with the grandmother, and generally speaking all village elders shared at least verbal authority over the children. This sharing of responsibility for the nurture and care of the young child in the villages was as a result of the strong family bond and community togetherness that seemed to characterise village life and living in most islands.

Much of the information on parental role in Guyana is credited to the work of Smith[+] who investigated certain aspects of the social structure of three village communities in this Caribbean mainland country.

[ø] Mathews, Dom Basil. Crisis of the West Indian Family: A Sample Study. Westport, Connecticut; Freewood Press, 1953, 1971.

[+] Smith, Raymond. The Negro Family in British Guyana --- London; Routledge and Paul in association with ISER, 1956.

His surveys and interviews conducted among the dominantly negro population disclosed the family or household group to be primarily a child-rearing unit, with the children being "subordinate to the authority of both their parents." He emphasised, further that the most significant relationship was between mother and child -- perhaps due to the duration of the breast-feeding period.

Another work on Trinidad -- the research of Hershovits and Hershovits[+] on a small settlement in North-East Trinidad -- confirmed some of Mathews' findings, but added that when the parents were separated it was general for the mother to "take the child or children." In this settlement it was observed that "only when a woman lived alone -- with no male actually living in the home -- was she considered the primary provider of the household." Rodman[ø] in a more recent reseatch on lower class families in Trinidad found very little difference between Mathews' findings and his observation. But it was very clear that the role of the father who acknowledged paternity, was to "mind the child", while that of the mother was to "feed, clothe and generally take care of the child almost to the exclusion of the father" whose authority nevertheless was usually visible whenever he was present. Rodman was surprised to find the common practice

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[+]Hershovits, M.J. & F.S. Trinidad Village. Knopf, 1947.

[ø]Rodman, Hyman. Lower-Class Families: The Culture of Poverty in Negro Trinidad. New York, Oxford University Press, 1971.

of children being given over to someone else's care -- be it a foster mother or child-minder -- unrelated to the family, in order for the mother to leave home for a prolonged period to earn a living to support the child. Of course, some children developed great affection for and attachment to and dependence on the mother substitute.

Research carried out on a small sample of the Jamaican farming community of Woodside, and among clerical and technical workers in the urban Rashford Avenue community emphasised sex roles. Based on evidence at her disposal Brodber[+] observed that "it is possible to say once more that the rural woman is expected to carry out a wider range of duties than her counterpart in the urban area." Her other observations highlighting the differences between the rural and urban parental roles included:

(i) in the farming area there was increased activity for household personnel, with individual home chores for children being more clearly designated than in the urban area,

(ii) regardless of the locality, a home in which the father and mother lived together was a relatively self-contained unit,

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[+]Brodber, Erna. Abandonment of Children in Jamaica. Mona: ISER, UWI, 1974.

(iii) while the expected role of the father in the rural area was that of a resource provider -- especially shelter, food and money, in the urban are he was expected, above everything else, to provide money for the maintainance of the child and the support of the mother,

(iv) children in the urban area when questioned identified certain duties as being the special responsibilities of male adults -- father and brother -- but in the rural area "there is no clear opinion as to the duty of the man with regards to the household unit - this being even less clear among the children who had no adult male living with them."

In an effort to ascertain the nature and status of kinship ties, the effect of strict discipline on mother-child relationship and the extent of interest in the child, Clarke+ carried out a research in three rural villages in Jamaica. Her findings did not only show that children from low-or-no-income bracket homes lived during their formative years in danger of having their close kinship ties disrupted due to the loose family setting, but also these

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+Clarke, Edith. My Mother Who Fathered Me. London: Allen & Unwin, 1957.

children grew up seeking security and expecting some permanence in human relationship from their mother only. She is of the opinion that the ambivalence of the father-child relationship, and the lack of a sense of security in the father could create in children a negative attitude toward authority in general.

Parenting education for fathers is one of the weakest features of the preparation for parenthood in the Caribbean. In some first world societies there is a programme of childbirth classes for expectant fathers -- they are trained to assist their wives in relaxation and breathing exercises, to assist her in aspects of the delivery, to make her, during labour, sensitive to his voice and thereby give her the necessary reassurance. In the Caribbean fathers are excluded from these experiences of childbirth and infant/child care as a result of the cultural expectations of a father's role. The absence of this kind of interaction, empathy and communication between wife and husband (churched or unchurched) seems to give rise to the indifferent and almost ambivalent behaviour of low-income bracket fathers to their children. Observations of father-infant, father-child interaction show that fathers do not speak and/or play with their young child frequently, and very few take any responsibility for the care of their infants. Generally speaking low-no-income bracket fathers will "boast" about the number of children they have -- stories have been told of men in the region who have up to 36 children. A father may boast about the academic career achievement of a child, although he may not have had anything to do with the upbringing of the child. Of course in every island the males

have greater sex freedom than the females in their age group.

Despite this laissez faire attitude of these fathers, the woman usually take it for granted that the man has the commanding authority in the home even if he is only a visiting spouse. This male dominance is a special feature of life in Anguilla where there is a great disproportionate ratio of men to women. Bryce[+] reports that the female is subordinate to the male, and

> "While the total responsibility for the day to day home operation is in the hands of women the authority for all this comes from the husband/father even though he is not present and may not be known by the younger child."

Greenfield's[ø] findings based on a regional sample provide evidence for the generalisation that in the West Indies the man of the house "wields the main switch in the powerhouse of familial rule." This is so despite the fact that besides providing dwelling and financial support for his wife and children he seemed to have few other responsibilities. In this sample Greenfield found also that although these men had very little contact with other members of the household, their consent was usually necessary for major decisions. Two very important points must be mentioned in connection with authority and responsibility in the household of the

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[+]Bryce-Lamporte, Roy Simon. Family Household and Intergenerational Relations in a Jamaican Village in Limon, Costa Rica, Institute of Caribbean Studies, 1973.

[ø]Greenfield, Sydney M. op cit.

English-speaking Caribbean family. One is the place of the grandmother, and the other is the role of the older sibling. Among the man, women and children interviewed by Bryce[+] it was found that the mother's mother had a very important part to play as one of the socialisation agents. Where the woman, especially a teenager, had her first child, "by mistake", her mother would more often than not take charge of the child, care it as her own, and pave the way for her daughter to start life again, or to be employed in order to support the child. In some instances the grandmother shared household with the daughter, or with the family -- husband, wife and children. The findings of the interviews[ø] with the 803 households showed that 418 had mother only as head, 41 had father only, 127 had grandmother only. Where the daughter is head of the household, the grandmother who lives with her is usually the decision maker and the disciplinarian.

A common phenomenon in the West Indies is the delegation of authority to older siblings. One of the older siblings -- generally the oldest child -- is given control over the others in the parent's absence. Recently it was found that in most low or no income bracket families older siblings in the age range 9-15 years• had child-care responsibilities for the infant

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[+] Bryce-Lamporte, Roy Simon. op cit

[ø] Grant, D.R.B. Living Conditions of Some Basic School Children: Pointers To Disadvantage. The Bernard Van Leer Foundation Project for Early Childhood Education (PECE), Mona, Kingston 7, 1971.

• Voluntary Organisation for the Upliftment of Children. Report on Survey of Age-range of Older Siblings as Childminders, 1980.

while the mother was at work.

MARITAL STATUS and BEHAVIOUR

The transition from boyhood and girlhood to parenthood is a very traumatic and frightening experience, especially for the unwed girl who was being looked upon by the community as "well-behaved". When the teenage girl becomes pregnant, social, economic and family status help to determine the outcome of the pregnancy as well as the likelihood of marriage. By and large, marriage is accepted as the natural state for male and femal, but the lack of sex and parenting education contributes to their unpreparedness for this role. It is almost safe to say that low-income parents do not discuss, encourage or answer facts-of-life questions raised by their children,[+] but it is very difficult despite parental precaution to hide the sex act from the hearing of children who live in a crowded situation.

Generally speaking, in the English-speaking Caribbean islands ambitious mothers in the low-income bracket families maintain a hold on their daughters to prevent them perpetuating the state of poverty in which they were born. In some families and in some districts parents tend to insolate their daughters so that they may earn the "well-behave" reputation. In certain circles this correct female behaviour is referred to as the

[+]Frustenberg, F. Unplanned Parenthood: The Social Consequences of Teenage Childbearing. New York: Free Press, 1976.

"cult of virginity" -- the ability of a young woman to "behave" before marriage. However, out-of-wedlock pregnancy does not necessarily doom a teenager, especially when her mother or grandmother "adopts" the baby and frees the teenage mother to return to school or seek employment.

On the question of child-bearing age in the West Indies Roberts[+] claims that "for all populations the most important age range for starting child-bearing is 15-19, and once more proportions are greatest for East Indians." In St. Vincent, which seems to have the highest degree of fertility in the region, fully 81% of the births are to unmarried women under 20 years. Of course, it must be remembered that in a region so rich with superstitious beliefs, those on sexual relations and pregnancy could have a tremendous influence upon the behaviour of the poor teenager. Unless there is open communication between the mother and her teenage daughter it is possible for the latter to believe:

(i) that no sex relations up to the age of puberty will result in madness,

(ii) that (a) a combination of bush tea and bush-bath after sexual relations prevents pregnancy, or

(b) sex relations in the sea or in a standing position prevents pregnancy, or

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[+]Roberts, G.W. Fertility and Mating in Four West Indian Populations. Kingston ISER, UWI, Jamaica, 1975.

(c) if a woman drinks a glass of ice-cold water or a strong dose of epsom salts immediately after sex relations she will not get pregnant or

(d) if she urinates immediately after having sex relations she will not get pregnant.

The unaware teenager, especially in the rural areas, thinks she can use any one or more of these superstitious means to prevent pregnancy and so she relies on them rather than on the contraceptives about which she knows very little or nothing.

Roberts' detailed analysis of the age specific rate points out that maximum fertility occurs in the age range 20-24 years, and the exployment statistics shows this age range as the one with the highest percentage of unemployed women throughout the region. Other significant observations with serious implications for the nurture and protection of the infant, are that (i) births to married women account for only about 4% of all births to under 20 year old mothers in Jamaica, and 7% in Barbados, and (ii) in the age range 26-29 years only about 41% and 26% of the births in Jamaica and Barbados, respectively, are to married women. The significance of Byrne[+] and Roberts' findings

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[+]Byrne, Joycelin. A Fertility Survey in Barbados. Social and Economic Studies - Vol.15 # 41, 1966.

must be judged by Moore's[+] data which show that "teenage mothers have slightly higher fertility rates than do adult mothers" and "mothers who were 17 years or younger at first birth had about five children, while those 20 years or older had approximately three children per family." Field[ø] in reporting his findings on the behavioural differences between the offsprings of teenage and adult parents, observed that infants of teenagers were "rated less optimally in their adaptability, approach to stimuli, distructibility and level of activity." In connection with the fertility rates, Roberts claims also that Barbados offers a useful illustration of the association between fertility and educational status. He found that the more educated the woman was, the more marked was her knowledge and use of contraceptives. In fact only 46% of the women with less than three years of schooling reported any knowledge of contraception, while 80% of those completing elementary school or having a secondary or higher education knew about contraceptives. From a study of census reports one deduces that in Jamaica there was a pronounced reduction in fertility with distance from urban centre for both 1943 and 1950, but in parishes like St. James and Manchester where appreciable social and economic development had taken place, the significance of the distance from the capital was

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[+]Moore, K.A. "The Social and Economic Consequences of Teenage Child-bearing for Women, Families and Government-Welfare Expenditures"; Washington D.C. The Urban Institute, 1978.

[ø]Field, T. Early Development of the Premature Offspring of Teenage Mothers. Miami, Florida. Mailman Center, University of Florida, 1979.

modified. Among the women of child-bearing age in Jamaica Cumper[+] found that there was little difference in the fertility rates for women in the two types of residential unions. These fertility rates were, however, substantially lower for women who had experienced a legal or common-law union but were no longer living with a man, and lowest for those who had never experienced a residential union. Additionally, her data showed an increase between 1943 and 1966 in the proportion of women within the child-bearing age-range who were living in residential unions, and an overall increase of 35% in fertility in women from 43-60.

During the last two decades the concentration on the health and nutrition of young children has resulted in a decline in infant mortality. The later statistics show that in St. Vincent it was about 54.8 per 1000 -- one of the highest in the region --, in Dominica it was 33.4, in St. Kitts 42.1, in St. Lucia 52.3, in Jamaica 23.5. Lowenthal[ø] reports that the high incidence of infant mortality could be attributed to the high rate of illegitimacy, pauperism, wilful neglect and abandonment, insufficient food, poor sanitation, and overcrowding in small and badly ventilated houses. Records show that gastroenteritis accounts for 19.1% to 50.4% of the deaths among young children of the poor, with parasitic and infectious diseases being responsible for another 10.8%. In the light of these observations it seems safe to assume that among the surviving children of the poor there is every

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[+]Cumper, Gloria. The Child Born Out of Wedlock. Torch Vol. 26 #1, 1977.

[ø]Lowenthal op cit.

possibility that a sizeable fraction of them continue to live and grow with some form of illness sufficiently harmful to cause deficit in their physical, behavioural and cognitive development.

FEEDING and NUTRITION

The highest compliment to a parent is to hear her child being referred to as "chubby" or "plump". To the parent these terms enhance her prestige since they indicate the quality of the care she has given to the child, especially during the breast-feeding period.

A large percentage of the infants of poor families are breast-fed, not so much according to any specific regid schedule but more so on demand -- when the baby cries. Generally, the decision whether or not a mother breast-feeds her child, depends very heavily on the opinion, support of and tradition in her immediate family, and, to a large extent in the society at large. In Guyana,[+] for example, the general rule is that all mothers breast feed their babies on demand over a long period of time, ranging from 9 to 12 months.

There are at least four superstitious beliefs which influence breast-feeding and support feeding on demand:

(i) if a baby is fed when he is not hungry or when he is too hungry the food will not agree with the body,

[+]Smith, Raymond. op cit.

(ii) allow the baby to cry to develop a good singing voice,

(iii) a nursing mother must drink some water to cool her milk before she breast-feeds her baby.

(iv) a nursing mother must squeeze some of her milk on the child's navel, soles of feet to cure gripe.

Although there is need for more evidence, it is fairly safe to observe that there was no common weaning pattern among the low-no-income bracket families -- they tended to wean either abruptly or gradually. It would appear, therefore, that in most cases the baby was breast-fed for a few months, then the bottle was introduced for day-time feeding and the breast is reserved for night-feeding. The bottle is usually used to introduce the child to bush tea and the milk from the clinic. Whatever pattern is adopted, some mothers do conform to the superstition that when weaning a baby the mother should tie three grains of corn and a piece of cork around her neck to dry her milk.

One of the most detailed study to be undertaken on the feeding of infants in Jamaica, was done by McGregor and Buck.[+] They investigated the feeding style of 300 infants from birth to 1 year, in Kingston.

[+]McGregor, S. and E.H. Back. Breast Feeding in Kingston, Jamaica. West Indian Medical Journal, Vol. xix # 2, 1970.

Looking at the kitchen where much of the baby's food was prepared, they rated most of them as poor -- dirty and fly-infested. It was under these conditions that 77% of the mothers begun bottle-feeding their children at 6 months. In examining the content of the baby's meal the researcher showed that only 18% of the mothers were feeding their children with the government subsidised half-cream milk, 65% had bought at least one jar of baby food during the one-year period, and corn-meal, the poor-man's cereal, was being served by a very high percentage of mothers not as a supplement to milk but more as a substitute. Of course they found instances in which the low or no-income bracket family served crushed irish potato, chocho, pumpkin, and soup to children 5 to 6 months old.

Perhaps because they were influenced by Cohen's observations, Desai et al[+] investigated and compared the social background of children whose quarterly weight-increments were above the 90th and below the 10th percentile. In reporting that by 2 years of age less than 20% of the children attained their expected weight or height, the researchers suggested that poverty, and rapid reproduction, and unstable relationship were influencial causes. In some conutries, the legal status of children made a difference to their health -- illegitimate children being at a disadvantage, but McGregor and Desai• found

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[+]Desai, Patricea, et al. Socio-economic and Cultural Influences on Child Growth in Rural Jamaica. Journal of Biososiological Science, # 2, 1970.

•McGregor, S.,and P. Desai. The Identification of Infants at the Risk of Malnutrition in Kingston, Jamaica. Tropical and Geographical Medicine, Vol. 29, 1977.

this not to be the case in Jamaica. This is an important finding, since the illegitimacy rate in this country is in the region of 70%.

The most extensive work on the nutritional status of the English-speaking Caribbean child was done by the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute[+] in Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. The report showed, inter alia, that as a result of the widespread moderate and severe mal-nourishment, between 10% and 25% of the children in the region were underweight for their age. The findings of a smaller study by Anthrobus,[•] supported the CFNI report, adding that overcrowding had a debilitating effect on the development of the under fives.

With the presence of many funding agencies in the Caribbean, came support for work with parents, especially in the areas of nutrition and family planning. Forde[ø] investigated the nature and extent of these programmes and found that child health

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[+]Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute. Nutrition Status of Children in the English-Speaking Caribbean, 1977

[•]Anthrobus, A.C.K. Child Growth and Related Factors in the Rural Community in St. Vincent. Journal of Tropical Pediatrics and Environmental Child Health. December, 1971.

[ø]Forde, Muriel. Nutrition Activities at Child Health Clinics in Barbados. DCN Thesis, CFNI (n.d.)

clinics in Barbados were providing mothers with information on breast feeding, proper nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, and immunisation. She observed that "family planning forms a vital part of the clinic's activities" and

> "Nurses from the Family Planning Unit visit the Welfare Clinics at each session and interview mothers, chat with the teenagers and introduce them to family planning."

The only known study on pre-primary school meals was done by PECE[+] in 1969. In Jamaica where 113,000 children 3-6 years old were attending early childhood education institutions at which at least a mid-day meal was being served, it was necessary for PECE to examine the nutritional value of the meals provided. It was clear that all the schools depended very heavily upon the Government's supply of food, which consisted of wheat, rolled oats, corn flour, dry skimmed milk powder, bulgar (the least liked by the children), cesame, cooking oil, butter or butter oil and cheese. In addition to providing the mid-day meals, 50% of the schools served a mid-morning snack, and 33% of them gave the children some food to take home, especially for the summer holidays. The cooking facilities ranged from an outdoor fire to a bamboo kitchen, to the teacher's kitchen, to a concrete building specially built for the purpose, with reasonably

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[+]PECE: "Lunch Programme Practices in Basic Schools." In 1967-69 Research Report, Bernard Van Leer Foundation Project for Early Childhood Education: Institute of Education, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston, 1971.

adequate utensils. Although the lunches varied from school to school, it was possible to ascertain some "typical lunches" which consisted of:

(i) porridge supported by such cereal products as bread, fried dumplings or Johnny cakes;

(ii) stew or soup containing meat or chicken back and starches - yams, potato, breadfruit, banana)

(iii) rice with codfish, or rice and peas with some milk or lemonade or a drink concocted by the teacher.

It was observed that neither fruits nor vegetables formed part of the typical lunch, and the school meal provided each child with approximately 33% to 50% and 25% to 33% of the protein and calorie requirements, respectively, for the proper and healthy development of young children. The study concluded that:

> "Tentatively ------ the diet of most children (in Basic School) is insufficient in terms of calorie intake, protien, iron, and vitamin A. It is very unlikely that the home meals make up for the differences between what the children get at school and what they need."

It was heartening to observe the hearty appetite of three and four year olds, but the sad thing was that most of these parents did not have enough food to satisfy this appetite. Unlike the child in the middle or higher income bracket family, no poor child could be finicking about what he would and would

not eat -- there was little choice. Another important observation was that eating was not a social occasion -- there was practically no conversation between parents and children -- each member of the household squatted and/or sat in different places inside or outside of the house.

Internationally, birth weight and height are generally among the indices for differentiating young children of developed and underdeveloped countries, and those of privileged and deprived families. Doctors advise that new born babies vary in weight, height and even brain weight, each of which reflects, inter alia, differences in the nutritional and health status of the mothers, and in the physical maturity of the babies. Other observers[+] of infants claim that in the United States low birth-weight ranks as the eighth highest cause of death, while other sources[•] have advanced evidence to prove that the results of low birth-weight include mental retardation, poor school performance and visual defects. Since in the Caribbean the incidence of low birth weight is a common feature among the poor, and the teenage mothers, it follows that infants born of any of these two types of parents will begin their lives at greater risk than do their counterparts of more privileged circumstances. In a random sample of one hundred 0-3 year olds in Antigua it was found that whereas at birth 17.7% of the boys weighed

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[+]Fitzpatrick, E., B.R. Reader, and L. Mastroianni. Maternity Nursing: Twelfth Edition. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, Co.,1971

[•]Wright, F.H. "A Controlled Follow-up Study of Small Prematures Born from 1952 through 1956." In the American Journal of Diseases of Children, #124, 1972. (506-521)

4-5 pounds about 31.5% of the girls were of that weight with more girls weighing 3 pounds than boys; 51% and 55.2% of the boys and girls, respectively, weighted 6-7 pounds. Above this latter weight 39% of the boys and 16.3% of the girls tipped the scale at 8-9 pounds, and 1.5% of the boys and none of the girls weighed 10-11 pounds. In St. Lucia the girls were usually slightly heavier and taller than the boys. "From the educational and health points of view," claims Grant,[+] "the concern is over the extent to which underweight children support Drillien's[•] findings that "they are likely to work below their intellectual capacity in school, and become very susceptible to every illness floating around."

The health reports[ø] produced by the Pre-school Education Project (PEP) of Dominica give some very interesting and significant findings on the physical health status of 3 year olds in the Project:

> "Dental caries and infestation with intestinal parasites especially round worms seem to be on the increase among the pre-schoolers in all schools."
>
> "It was customary to find scabies, eczema, sores, rashes and scalp infections in varying proportions in the schools."
>
> "Worm medicine -- Ketrax -- was given to 84 children -- repeat doses had to be given on a smaller scale in many instances."

[+]Grant, D.R.B. op cit

[•]Drillien, Cecil M. The Growth and Development of of the Prematurely Born Infant. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1964.

[ø]The Pre-School Education Project (Dominica): Health Report. January-April, 1980.

"Scotts Head -- poverty is the main problem -- housing conditions are deplorable -- there is lack of proper sanitary facilities -- the mothers are alcoholics, and one can smell the alcohol on their breath as early as 11.00 a.m. Of 30 pre-schoolers on roll at the school:

24 were malnourished
20 suffered from worm infestation
11 had dental caries
1 suffered from a severe eye infection."

"Most pre-schoolers throughout the state received skimmed milk ---- parents of needy children were also given skimmed milk ----- the more severe cases of malnutrition received supplementary vitamins and iron."

SEPARATION

In every island in the English-speaking Caribbean parents have some measure of autonomy as to how they bring up their children. Because of this freedom one finds a whole continuum of parent-child relationship/treatment ranging from love and warmth to hate and open hostility. But somewhere along this continuum there is a community standard of child-treatment which if violated places the parent in a bad light. Depending on the degree of violation and the overt parent behaviour associated with the violation. The anti-community treatment of the child is sometimes referred to as "child abuse."

The causes of child abuse have been traced to:

(i) parents who as children were deprived of mothering, and/or were targets of parental violence,

(ii) the stress due to living conditions, family size, unemployment and, in some cases, social isolation, gives rise to the climate for the anti-social parental treatment of the child,

(iii) the rejected or unwanted child, overtly or by implication, would lead the parent to have a dislike for the child,

(iv) the child's own behaviour, in that he/she is difficult to rear, for whatever reason(s).

Although, in the West Indies flogging is a regular and accepted form of punishing a child, there are not many known and disturbing cases of the abusive use of corporal punishment. It is safe to say that severe forms of child abuse are rare in the region. Nevertheless, children of the poor in the English-speaking Caribbean are victims of one of the mild forms of child abuse -- separation with its multiform of "give-away", abandonment, familial discrimination based on colour, rejection/neglect due to a physical handicap, and abdication of parental responsibilities.

On the average the Caribbean child is said to be emotionally secure because it grows up in a broadly based family. But the Caribbean Contact[+] has expressed some concern over the frequency of child abandonment

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[+]Caribbean Council of Churches: Family Means More Than Just Parents (in Caribbean Contact), 1979.

in the region. It does not only opine that urbanisation and migration of parents from the country to the town may enlarge the extended family pattern at home, but also points out that children were sometimes left behind without any proper provision for their care and protection. Unfortunately, although not mentioned by "Contact" it must be emphasised that children abandoned in this way are generally taken in by a low-no-income bracket family -- a situation which usually perpetuates hopelessness.

In order to ascertain information on the alleged increase of abandonment of children in Jamaica, in 1974 Brodber[+] made a study of a ward at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital. By means of questionnaires and a review of the hospital register, she sought to find out what impelled a mother to abandon her newly born child. The results were tabulated under type of union, type and content of social grouping, expectations of support, perceived alternative means of support. It showed that approximately 8% of mothers who came into the hospital normally resided outside the area being served by the institution. Of the 208 patients interviewed 49 had come in from outside the Corporate Area. This practice of leaving the rural areas to "lie in" at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital made abandoning of one's child very easy. On the question of type of union it was found that 60% of 73 of the women who had conceived in casual and/or visiting unions, were between the age of 17 and 20 years. When asked about support for their children, most mothers hoped that the baby's father would shoulder this responsibility,

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[+]Brodber, Erna. op cit

while a small percentage was not too hopeful, and about 4% saw themselves as the child's only source for meeting its basic needs.

Beauburn[+] in a paper giving his opinion on aspects of the social and developmental needs of pre-school children, observed that children in the Caribbean sent from one home to another during their early years were likely to have personality problems -- "become neurotic, attention seekers, dependent, and unable to form any deep emotional bonds," almost becoming unreachable. He opined also that children who did not get any attention during their formative pre-school years, were likely to enter the primary schools already seriously handicapped socially, emotionally and intellectually, and recommended very strongly that priority be given to the pre-school years.

Harry Belafonte[•] in response to the question, "What kind of childhood did you spend in Jamaica?" appears to exemplify Beauburn's view. He recalls that:

> "From 1935 to 1939, when I was 12, I had a rather difficult time of it in Jamaica. First of all I lived with many different families. The economic situation in my own family made it an extreme hardship, so as a consequence I was always "boarded" out with different people ---.

[+]Beauburn, Michael, Human Growth and Development: The Social and Emotional Development and Needs of Pre-School Children. Department of Social and Preventive Medicine Manual for Community Health Workers, Mona, 1969.

[•]Hussey, Dermott. Belafonte: Home At Last. In Sky-writing: Air Jamaica Flight Magazine #26, August, 1980.

> Today one looks upon a certain kind of conduct as leading to special psychological or emotional problems, and would use words like "Maladjusted". What it was, with the absence of parents, the absence of a certain kind of care in my early life I found it very hard to relate to anything. I couldn't study, I couldn't involve myself as I would have loved to have been able. I would say my childhood in Jamaica was fraught with great conflict and disturbance."

The findings of Robertson[+] also support many of Beauburn's observations. She points out that children who were subjected to inconsistent care by substitute parents, though they appeared to be physically normal, tended to show signs of emotional stress, and may even harm themselves in a number of ways, become aggressive and anti-social; and even developed school phobia.

VALUES and ATTITUDES

To a visitor to the West Indies there would seem to be a novel reciprocity of responsibilities and expectations in the society, although the low-no-income bracket families are landless. Generally, the behaviour of these families is founded on respect for authority and loyalty to an employer, and employers of (middle or high income bracket families) are expected to show respect for their employees. Undergirding this reciprocity in the behaviour of employer to employee, is the fact that class status is determined more by income and occupation than by place/station of birth. High income, the possession of wealth, and/or the position one holds in an organisation could lift anyone

[+]Robertson, Elaine. Junior's Fear of the Dark and that "Tummy Ache". Caribbean Contact. April 1979.

from the sty of Trench Town to the sky of middle or upper middle class status in the society. In a situation like this there is no wonder that from birth children in the lower class are taught how to behave according to the expectations of the middle class, and children in the other classes are inculcated with the expectations of their parents' class. Green[+] conjectured that the value system of young adolescents was likely to be the result of earlier child rearing practices. In her comparative study among 4th formers in fortyone primary schools in Trinidad, she found that negro children expressed more of each of the following values than their East Indian counterparts: self-adequacy, non-materialism, extra-family involvement, variability, parent reinforcement, free expression, avoidance of pro-social aggression. Kerr[•] suggests that although the Jamaican peasants began life with an extraverted gay attitude to life, frustrations in later childhood usually pushed them into a position of introversion. She observes further that the peasants in attempting to hide the "dark side" of their life also repressed their creative ability as was usually shown in their restricted expression.

Very early, children are taught to be kind to one another. Davenport[ø] reports that from an early age youngsters were taught to share almost everything they received, with their brothers, sisters, half-siblings and neighbours. Additionally, he observed,

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[+]Green, Helen B. Values of Negro and East Indian School Children in Trinidad. Social and Economic Studies. Vol.14 #2, 1965.

[•]Keer, Madeline. Personality and Conflict in Jamaica. London: Collins, 1963.

[ø]Davenport, William. The Family System of Jamaica: Social and Economic Studies, 1961.

that almost from birth boys and girls received different treatment, and different behaviour patterns were expected of them, with the girls being always in the company of their mothers and older women, imitating and helping them. On the other hand the boys were not pressed into any household occupational roles, but were allowed to play much more than the girls.

Although there is no study on the part religion plays in the upbringing of children, it is important to mention that a fair percentage of young children of the poor attend Sunday School and the regular church services of the denomination of their parents' choice. Sometimes the godparents influence the church affiliation of the god-child, since they are expected to help "train the child in the way he should, that when he is old he will not depart from it."

DISCIPLINE

To most of these parents in the low-no-income bracket, discipline is interpreted to mean corporal punishment. Other methods of disciplining children are either unknown or un-used, due mainly to lack of knowledge of the why, the how, the when, and the forms of discipline, as well as to a misunderstanding of the behaviour patterns of young children. The PECE 1970 Study[+], parents' responses to the question "What do you do when your child does something that displeases you," showed that 80% of them "beat" the children, 9.5% took away their privileges, and 5% spoke to them harshly. Too many parents still subscribe to: "a child must be seen and not heard," and they often cite "don't spare the rod and spoil the child" in support of the use of the strap. One important noticeable feature of

[+]Grant, D.R.B. op cit.

corporal punishment, is that, by and large, it is the mother who punishes the girls, and the father punishes the boys, but where there is no father, the mother punishes both sexes.

In a study on the problems encountered by the unwed mother in disciplining her children, Jacobs and Jacobs[+] observed that when the mother had to go to work, disciplining of the children was left to her parents (chiefly the children's grandmother). The atmosphere of this discipline ranged from being over-protective to being inflexibly authoritarian. They emphasised that very often the punishment had no relationship to the "wrong", therefore from an early age children were obliged to learn how to twist the truth, and speak against their conscience in order to defend themselves and/or win the affection of the grandmother.

The St. Thomas study by Dalton[ø] examined personality development and the behaviour of children who were separated from their mothers. Through questionnaires, home visits and interviews, and tests, he found that the basic concerns of parents were oriented toward the social behaviour of their children, and therefore aggression toward other children was frowned upon. He noticed that whenever children were engaged in fight, parents tended to punish them without carrying out any investigation. To his surprise discipline was exercised early in the child's life, punishment was severe and the "home atmosphere was authoritarian

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[+]Jacobs, Len and Beth. op cit.

[ø]Dalton, R.H. Mothers and Children: A Study of Parent-Child Relationships in St. Thomas (Virgin Islands). Cornell University, 1964.

rather than democratic." Another significant observation of his is summed up in, "Parents value respect for adults as a must, and they exert a good deal of pressure on the children to be socially conforming in this area."

Clarke[+] in reporting the findings of her study highlighted the differences between mother-child and father-child relationships from the point of view of discipline. She observed that although the mother in the low-no-income bracket family tended to be harsh in her disciplinary measures, the mother-child relationship was not affected since the harshness was usually tempered by demonstrations of affection bordering on indulgence. On the other hand, it appeared to her that the father, whose relationship was at best ambivalent, did not show tenderness, therefore it was not unusual for the father's discipline to "leave a permanent scar" -- physically or emotionally. Blake,[•] however, seems to strike a different note on the question of mother-child relationship when she states that "The instability of the Jamaican family, however, often seriously disturbs the mother's relationship to her children."

Based on the evidence available on the question of discipline in the low-no-income bracket family in the English-speaking Caribbean, it seems reasonable to conclude that, generally,

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[+]Clarke, Edith. op cit.

[•]Blake, Judith. op cit.

> "Misbehaviour is followed by 'flogging" in 78% of the households of the poor -- there are very few privileges to be withheld, there is no time to reason with the child, there is no love to withhold from the child. The larger the family the greater is the tendency 'not to spare the rod and spoil the child'".

PLAY and EARLY STIMULATION

Any discussion on early childhood education must be associated with thoughts on "play", since it is recognised and accepted that play activities pervade the life pattern of children from the cradle to adulthood. Over the years there have been several exponents of the place of play in the development of the young child. Froebel[+] stressed his belief in "the philosophic conceptions which underline the games will impress themselves on the child's mind and determine his attitude to life." Piaget[ø] has argued that play is "predominantly a form of assimilation -- beginning in infancy and continuing through the stage

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[@]Grant, D.R.B. Caribbean Underprivileged Children: Their Ecology and Intervention Programmes. Paper prepared for the Santiago (Chile) Symposium on Critical Poverty in Children, 1979.

[+]Rusk, Robert. The Doctrines of the Great Educators. New York, St. Martin's Press, 1957.

[ø]Piaget, J. Play Dreams and Imitation in Childhood. New York: Norton, 1951.

of concrete operational thought." McCall's[+] investigation of the characteristics of toys which seem to cause responses from babies, showed that babies under 1 year old preferred to play with toys that made a noise, while Switzky, Haywood and Isett[•] found that for the older children manipulative exploration had a direct relationship to the complexity of the object. Piaget supports this view by observing that "stimulus complexity may stimulate interest and curiosity."

Because it is acknowledged that young children's sensorimotor play is influenced not only by the types of toys,but also by comfort in settings where they are reassured by the presence of loved care givers, it is imperative that parents provide and participate in activities that will stimulate cognitive and social development. However, McGregor and Desai[ø] have brought to the fore the lack of toys and books in homes where the parents were so poorly educated that with or without toys they could not provide the type of stimulation necessary for the psychological development of their children.

[+]McCall, R.B. Exploratory Manipulation and Play in the Human Infant. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development. 1974, Serial #155, 39 (2).

[•]Switzky, H.N., H.C. Haywood, and R. Isett. Exploration, Curiosity and Play in Young Children: Effects of Stimulus Complexity. Developmental Psychology. #10, 1974.

[ø]McGregor, S and P Desai. op cit

An examination of some of the responses to the PECE 1970 Study[+] shows that the Bible was the only book present in most homes, 760 of the 803 households had no toys, 766 did not respond to the questions on the use of games, and only in 5% of them did the parents find the time to play with their children. Despite this gloomy picture regarding the lack of facilities for early stimulation of the thought processes of children of low-no-income bracket families, Jarrett[•] has given the assurance that Basic schools (in Jamaica) can and do provide a rich variety of experiences that compensate for the deficit in cognitive and social stimulation. In fact her study, which included an examination of the potential of the "Yards" as a group-Day-care-Centre, revealed that the "Yard" was providing much scope for adults and children, and children and children to play. Quantitatively she saw that 72% of the parents got together in the "Yard" to play with their children; 48% of the children had their own picture books; 66.6% of the children who had books also had toys though they did not know how to use them; and 48% of the children went on outings to Coconut Park, and other places.

Another encouraging note for the West Indies and Third World countries was struck by McGregor and Desai[ø] as a result of their experience with their

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[+]Grant, D.R.B. op cit.

[•]Jarrett, Joyce E. A Survey of the Experiential Background of a Sample of Lower Class Pre-School Jamaican Children. B.Ed Study, University of the West Indies, 1977.

[ø]McGregor, S and P. Desai. op cit.

Home Intervention Programme. Through this programme they sought to give parents a better understanding of the importance of play; of the awareness of their children's level of development, and of the educational value of toys. The experiment showed that Jamaican mothers from the lower socio-economic status were a potentially valuable source of education for their young children.

PROVISIONS FOR EDUCARE and PROTECTION

Where some or all of the physical, social, health and emotional needs of children are not being met at home because of poverty, it becomes necessary for the public and private sectors, and voluntary agencies to provide ways and means whereby these deficiencies may be compensated for before it is too late. In the West Indies the institutions which serve the 0-6 year olds provide major avenues (through a variety of services) that reach the child population which make up about 20% of the population in the region. (In Anguilla it is 50%, and in St. Vincent it is 35%).

Since the extended family is no longer a common phenomenon in the region, and more mothers are forced to enter the labour force, the demand for pre-school institutions for the 0-6 year olds has increased during this decade, and the cry for "social justice for all" led to the Castries Workshop[+]

[+]"Report on Second Workshop on Social Legislation Relating to the Family and Child in the Caribbean." Castries, St. Lucia, 26th-29th August, 1976.

which discussed significant topics such as: maintenance, custody and upbringing, physical and health care, education and social development, inheritance, nationality and family property.

Grant+ points out that the governments of Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, Grenada, Jamaica, and Montserrat have made public commitments -- fulscale and partial -- regarding the provision and development of facilities and services for the education, care and protection of young children. There are different types of day care and pre-school services available to the under 3 year olds in the region. There is the CRECHE, few in number in the region, and usually operated by the government (single handed or in partnership with the community welfare agency) to serve children aged 3 months to under 3 years. The most popular institution in the rural areas is the FAMILY DAY CARE HOME, (sometimes referred to as the Backyard Nursery) which offers only custodial care. In Jamaica the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, UWI, investigated the three Nurseries in the August Town and Hermitage areas, and concluded, inter alia, that the majority of the childminders had reached a reasonable educational standard, and that there could be considerable advantage to the small family grouping in an environment similar to that from which the children come•. A third type of institution

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+Grant, D.R.B. op cit.

•Hall, Ruth, Background Nurseries: Day-care of Children -- the People's Way. April, 1979.

-- the most common -- is the DAY CARE CENTRE (including the PARK MODEL of the Regional Pre-School Child Development Centre, UWI) which is expected to offer coordinated and comprehensive services to both children and parents. On the whole the ratio of childminder to child in these institutions is 1:12, and with the help and cooperation of parents and UNICEF many of them have a variety of toys, games, and play equipment.

Hall warns that going to any of these institutions, especially the Basic school could present the child with a new set of problems as "for the first time in his life his mother's authority is challenged and by someone who has undisputed control over him."

Within this framework of services for the education, care and protection of the young child there are some individual programmes that merit special mention in this review. In Jamaica there was the Bernard Van Leer Foundation PECE programme for the 4-6 year olds which aimed at improving the quality of the educational and related services. This project is responsible for the upsurge of interest in and concern for the underprivileged young child in the region. The Bernard Van Leer Foundation Centre for Early Childhood Education (CECE) with its local, regional and international dimensional activities, is consolidating and expanding the influence of PECE, within and outside the West Indies.

The voluntary organisation of SERVOL in Trinidad, has recently launched a multifaceted "Child to Community Project" for the development of the young child and the community -- hand in hand.

All early childhood projects have parent education as an important element. In Barbados there is a nation-wide parent education programme under the aegis of PAREDOS -- a voluntary agency.

To enable parents to better provide for their children, income generating projects are gradually becoming a sine qua non of early childhood programmes. This trend is being exemplified in Dominica and St. Vincent, with the support of CANSAVE.

All of the governments in the region are not only fully aware of the importance of early childhood education (0-6 year olds), but are also committed in varying degrees to its development. In Guyana, the government has assumed full responsibility for early childhood education (0-6 years), in Barbados there is nearly 100% government support of pre-school programmes, in Jamaica the government's budget for early childhood education totals nearly J$8 million per annum in subsidies. The government of Montserrat makes an annual grant of EC$42,000 to $60,000 to the Nursery Schools' Association for use in nursery schools. Positive demonstration of interest by the Government of Dominica is shown by subsidies to schools through the Social Centre and duty-free concessions on all materials imported for the early childhood education project.

Early childhood education and its supporting services are financed regionally and nationally by local, regional and international agencies. In the islands financial support is received from:

(a) the governments, in the forms described above,

(b) voluntary agencies which raise funds to support the pre-school institutions under their charge,

(c) church and church-groups which sponsor some of these early childhood education institutions,

(d) service clubs, friendly societies and organisations which undertake to adopt institutions that provide day care services for the underprivileged.

CADEC is one of the regional organisations to provide assistance of different kinds for day care centres in some of the islands. International agencies like UNICEF, CANSAVE, CISA, Bernard Van Leer Foundation, and US-AID give financial and/or technical assistance to each island in the region. In some islands like Jamaica, Dominica and Guyana the community is closely involved in the operation, management and financial support of pre-schools.

Because the greatest aggregates of malnourished children are to be found among the underprivileged, some of the early compensatory programmes were concentrated on food and nutrition. In some islands CANSAVE spearheaded the health and nutrition programmes for pre-school children with the specific purpose of "supplementing protein diet of children." Other agencies like WHC, IPPF, UNFPA, ILO,FAO, PAHO and UNICEF have trained community Health Aides and/or augmented the health delivery systems in the islands. The health and nutrition programmes vary from island to

island and the range of services, though limited include:

(a) prenatal services in all the islands are available to mothers;

(b) immunisation against polio, diptheria, etc. is provided through clinics and health centres;

(c) some form of medical care is obtainable in "integrated health centres,"

(d) the Ministries of Health and of Education monitor the World Health Food Programme,

(e) preparation of teachers' college students for teaching health education and family life education is now general;

(f) school health programmes aim at promoting healthy living and the prevention of health defects.

The importance of the health and nutrition programmes has been emphasised by NcGregor and Desai[+] who found that children with small head-size were the victims of malnutrition.

[+]McGregor, Sally. op cit.

Additionally they observed that children from the higher socio-economic status were better in language and in five motor behaviour than those in the lower socio-economic status. Richardson's[+] report on the observation of children who had been hospitalised for severe malnutrition during their first two years of life,concluded that these children differed from their classmates both in classwork and in social functioning at school.

The governments spend from 10% to 19% of the annual budget on health and allied services. In most islands the dental services are very limited, and the existing ones are confined mainly to extraction, as there are practically no provisions for conservation.

Reports from the different islands show that some gains have been made in developing programmes for handicapped children. Unfortunately, these gains have not been general. However, the parents of these children, the teachers, and the policy-makers are beginning to realise that a high percentage of these children have "superior mental, emotional, and social characteristics." Some islands are making provision for incorporating programmes for these children in the facilities for normal children. In Jamaica, in addition to the Hope Valley Experimental School (4-12 year olds) at U.W.I. where the physically handicapped work side by side with the normal children, plans are afoot to have at least 10% of the handicapped children included in the regular Day Care

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[+]Richardson, S.A. The Background of School Children Severely Malnourished in Infancy. Advances of Paedriatrics. Vol.21, 1974.

Programme. Trinidad and Tobago do not provide a planned pre-school education programme for the handicapped, but the voluntary organisations receive government subvention for helping different types of handicapped children.

Because every island provides a few children's wards or a children's hospital for accommodating sick children, McGregor Desai and Grantham[+] investigated the status of the adult-child relationship in paediatric wards and isolation cubicles. Their findings which should be of some importance to child-minders in hospitals, showed that the staff was not only silent, and neutral, but more often than not was unresponsive to the children's cry of distress. This aloofness was compounded by the absence of play materials, and insufficient attention to the social, intellectual and emotional development of the children.

LEGISLATION

Prior to the decade of the 70's legislation relating to the family and the child was based mainly on the English laws which provided limited protection for the illegitimate children who formed 50% to 75% of the children born in the region. The regional conference on "The Needs of the Young Child in the Caribbean" held in Barbados in 1967 identified the need for an examination of these laws with a view to seeing "in what way they needed to be strengthened or revised to

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[+]McGregor, Sally, et al, op cit

meet the particular needs of the Caribbean society."+ Implementation of this decision resulted in family laws being revised in many islands, and legislation for the care and protection of children being enacted. Some of the laws already passed by the parliaments in the region are:

(i) Most islands have a Buerau for Women's and Children's Affairs, headed by a Minister of State;

(ii) In Guyana the laws of the country provide specifically for the care and protection of children who cannot be taken care of by their parents;

(iii) Jamaica's "Status of Children Act," (1976) removes the legal disabilities of children born out of wedlock. The Family Court is also an important legislation which benefits the illegitimate child;

(iv) The "Maintenance Order Act" (1977), the "Children's Act" (1977), and the "Separation and Maintenance Act" (1978)

+"Report on Second Workshop on Social Legislation Relating to the Family and Child in the Caribbean." Castries, St. Lucia, 1976.

were passed by the St. Lucia parliament -- with the latter requiring the father of the child, irrespective of the status of birth, to make provision for the care and maintenance of the child before leaving the State.

CONCLUSION

This Literature in Retrospect has explored the contributions which a number of researchers and writers have made to an understanding of the West Indian family in various island environments. Their main emphasis was on practices used in the care and protection of the Children of the Lesser World in the English-Speaking Caribbean, but with little or no reference to the educational implications.

In a region where teenage pregnancy is so prevalent it is evident that one of the glaring omissions has been data indicating any association between child development and teenage parenting, and between the growth patterns and adaptive behaviour of children of older mothers and teenage mothers.

It is true to say that every government, every welfare organisation and every service club in the English-speaking Caribbean, individually and collectively, is committed to the development of services for the young child, especially the underprivileged.

It is true also, to say that the public sector and parents and the community in each Caribbean island are waking up not only to what they have to do for the young child, but also to the possibilities of achieving it. It seems reasonable to conjecture that the writers of the books, papers, and reports reviewed in this Literature in Retrospect seem to be saying to everyone interested in and concerned with the health, education, welfare -- care and protection -- of the Children of the Lesser World in the English-speaking Caribbean, "Verbum sat sapienti."

APPENDIX I

THE WEST INDIAN CHILD : A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

FOREWORD

This bibliography is a list of materials on the social background of the young child in the English-speaking Caribbean. It concentrates on early childhood as it was prepared for the Bernard Van Leer Project at the request of Mr. D.R.B. Grant.

The materials are to be found in the libraries and departments as indicated by the symbols below:

ISER Lib.	-	Institute of Social and Economic Research (U.W.I.) Library
WIC	-	West Indies Collection - U.W.I. Library
DOC. CENTRE	-	Documentation Centre - School of Education, U.W.I.
CFNI	-	Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (U.W.I.)
WIR Lib.	-	West India Reference Library
TMRU	-	Tropical Metabolism Research Unit
KSAPLib.	-	Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Library

UWI Periodical
DSPM - Department of Social and Preventive Medicine

They are also arranged in alphabetical order according to author of articles (in periodicals, books, newspapers), books, pamphlets, microfilm reel, research project, theses. The Classification number used in the particular library or department is also given at the end of each entry (except for articles) to facilitate easy access.

Sheila Williams

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